

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 HEW-08 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 RSC-01 SCA-01 SCSE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 OPR-02 FBO-01 SS-15

NSC-10 RSR-01 /107 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7657

UNCLAS MEXICO 6390

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH/CASC/MX

SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE REPORT FOLLOW-UP

REF: MEXICO 6350

1. INTERNATIONAL PRESS REPORTS, PARTICULARLY US NEWS MEDIA, APPARENTLY EXAGGERATED BUT SITUATION IN AFFECTED AREA IS SERIOUS, APPROACHING DISASTER PROPORTIONS. LOCAL MEDIA INFORMATION ON CASUALTIES QUITE CONFUSING, VARYING BETWEEN SEVERAL HUNDRED TO SEVERAL THOUSAND.
2. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE HAS SET UP CONTROL POST BUT MOST DIFFICULT COMMUNICATE WITH THAT OFFICE. LATEST FIGURES AVAILABLE FROM THAT SOURCE GIVE 160 DEAD, SEVERAL HUNDRED INJURED. ANOTHER GOM SOURCE (SECRETARIAT COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT) INDICATES 350 DEAD AND 1231 INJURED.
3. DAMAGED CITIES AND TOWNS REPORTED AS BEING ORIZABA, CORDOBA, QUECHOLAC (EPICENTER ACCORDING TO LATEST REPORTS ALTHOUGH SOME MEDIA CITE ACATLAN, STATE OF PUEBLA AS EPICENTER) CIUDAD CORDAN, TECAMACHALCO, VARADERO, TEKNGO, STA. CATORINA VILLANUEVA.

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4. ACCORDING RED CROSS, HEALTH PROBLEMS MAY ARISE BECAUSE

CORPSES OF VICTIMS IN SMALL TOWNS WHERE HOUSES, BUILDINGS IN RUINS, BEING COLLECTED IN OPEN TOWN SQUARE. FEDERAL STATE AND OTHER ASSISTANCE CONVERGING UPON DISASTER AREA, ALTHOUGH MEXICAN RESOURCES AVAILABLE DISASTER RELIEF ALREADY STRAINED BY RECENT FLOODS.

5. COMMUNICATIONS STILL INTERRUPTED. MEXICO CITY MEDIA RECEIVING DATA FROM SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS RUSHED TO SCENE WHO CALLING IN FROM WHEREVER ABLE DO SO. CHANNEL 8 ADVISES WILL BEAM SPECIAL REPORT TO STATES AT 2000 LOCAL TIME (2200 HOURS EDST).

6. EMBASSY RECEIVING NUMEROUS CALLS FROM CONCERNED RELATIVES AMCITS PRESENTLY IN MEXICO.

7. RE MEXICO CITY. LOCAL MEDIA CITE INTERNATIONAL PRESS AS ERRONEOUSLY REPORTING SEVERE DAMAGE TO CAPITAL, FIRES RAGING, POWER OUT, CREVASSES IN STREETS, MAJOR BUILDINGS, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL PALACE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED. QUITE TO THE CONTRARY, THE SITUATION IN MEXICO IS NORMAL AS REPORTED IN MEXICO 6350. THERE WAS A POWER CURTAILMENT OF SHORT DURATION AT 0400 HOURS, AFFECTING ONLY 15 PERCENT OF CITY. SERVICE WAS RESTORED QUICKLY.

8. USIS PLANS SEND WRAP-UP LATER AUGUST 28. EMBASSY PLANS FURTHER REPORT MORNING AUGUST 29.

9. NO REPEAT NO REPORTS HAVE REACHED US AS TO CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE TO US CITIZENS OR PROPERTY AS OF COB AUGUST 28.

10. CORRECTION: MEXICO 6350 REPORTED INTENSITY AS 5.5 ON THE RICHTER SCALE. THIS IS CORRECT FOR MEXICO CITY READING. INTENSITY AT EPICENTER HOWEVER WAS 7 TO 7.8 ON RICHTER SCALE, ACCORDING TO OTHER, LATER REPORTS.

11. AT TRANSMISSION TIME (1830 LOCAL) EMBASSY HAD BEEN UNABLE CONFIRM DIRECTLY WITH OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY MEDIA REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAS DECLARED NATIONAL DISASTER AND PUT NATIONAL DISASTER PLAN INTO EFFECT.
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